

Law

Mission. The mission of the Law Department is to provide high quality legal services and guidance to the City Council, the City Manager, and the departments, boards, agencies, utilities and commissions of the City.

Overview. The Law Department has three main functions: provide legal counsel for City Council and staff, provide legal representation for the City, and prosecute cases in Municipal Court. Staff are divided into prosecutorial and civil legal sections. The Department is financed primarily from the General Fund.

Finance and Operations. One of the Law Department's core functions is to prosecute offenders in Municipal Court while maintaining "walk-in" hours to assist citizens. A staff of seven, led by a prosecution supervisor, provides the service. The positions are supported by two clerical positions. Also included in the prosecution area is the diversion coordinator.

The Law Department administers the City's diversion and deferred judgement programs. The programs are available for eligible first time offenders. Eligible offenses include speeding, petit larceny, certain drug offenses, DUI, and domestic violence. In every diversion case, program fees and fines are assessed to finance all program costs.

Selected Service Level Measures - Diversion				
	1998	1999	2000	2001
DUI diversions accepted	594	740	775	775
Petit theft diversions accepted	344	386	400	400
Speeding diversions accepted	674	674	720	720
Drug diversions accepted	126	354	375	375
DV diversions accepted	443	496	500	500

Another significant role of the Law Department is to represent the City in civil legal actions, including labor, utility franchise, and environmental disputes and negotiations. Law staff also provides legal advice to the City Council and City staff. A staff of eight attorneys focus on handling diverse requests, from drafting and reviewing proposed contracts, resolutions and ordinances, defending the City in tort claim matters, rendering legal opinions, and assisting with the City's legislative program. Law staff are also called upon to provide legal advice to City departments, boards and officials.

An upcoming technological improvement for the Law Department is the replacement of the antiquated Public Safety System utilized in conjunction with Police and Municipal Court. The new system will encompass bar code and drivers' license scanning, imaging and Internet technology. The Integrated Public Safety System will offer a centralized information system shared and utilized by Police, Prosecution, and Court.

The imaging component of the public safety system will allow multiple users to simultaneously access single case files; will significantly reduce storage and filing problems; and will facilitate case review and preparation functions. Imaging will provide desktop viewing of case documents once the documents have been entered into the system, eliminating the task of filing and re-filing case files.

Funding to purchase drug court software program was included in the 2001 budget. The software will consolidate defendants' information and provide the drug court team one centralized access point.

Law Department Budget Summary					
	1999 Actual	2000 Adopted	2000 Revised	2001 Adopted	2002 Approved
Personal Services	1,307,259	1,417,470	1,462,040	1,458,750	1,480,440
Contractual Services	207,206	240,170	223,110	234,260	242,650
Commodities	8,791	9,020	10,330	9,020	9,020
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total Law Expenditures	1,523,257	1,666,660	1,695,480	1,702,030	1,732,110
Position Summary					
Total full-time	24	25	25	25	25
Total part-time	2	1	2	1	1
Total FTE	24.50	25.25	25.50	25.25	25.25